Your social security rights

in United Kingdom

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Directorate C — Social Affairs

Unit C.2 — Modernisation of social protection systems

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Your social security rights in United Kingdom

2017 Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

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Sometime in your life you may be in need of the support provided by social security benefits. If you are living in the country where you were born and satisfy the qualifying conditions, you will be entitled to receive support. But you also have the right to receive benefits if you are a national of any EU country and move to another part of the EU. The information below sets out when you are eligible for benefits, what you are entitled to and how to go about claiming it.

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Family

Child Benefit

This chapter tells you what you need to know about child benefits in United Kingdom.

If you have lived, worked and/or paid insurance in another EU country, your time living in another EU country, the period you have worked or the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits are calculated in the UK.

In what situation can I claim?

You will get Child Benefit if you are responsible for a child under 16 or under 20 if they are in approved education (at least 12 hours a week of supervised study or course-related work experience).

You may also be entitled to Guardian's Allowance if the child you are caring for has lost one or both of their parents.

You could get Child Benefit if you are a national of a European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland and work in the UK (or get certain UK benefits, e.g. a State Pension).

What conditions do I need to meet?

Child Benefit is paid to only one person: usually an adult who lives with the child or who contributes to the cost of looking after them.

The adult who receives the benefit does not necessarily have to be the child's parent. If you are adopting or fostering, apply for the benefit as soon as the child comes to live with you. The nationality of the child does not affect your claim.

There are a series of changes that you will need to report, such as if the child will be away from you for eight weeks in a row. A complete list of circumstances you will need to report can be found here.

If you or your partner's income is £50 000 or more, you may have to pay Child Benefit tax charge. Use the benefit calculator to get an idea of how this might affect you.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

There are 2 Child Benefit rates. These rates are fixed until April 2017.

Who the allowance is for	Rate (weekly)
Eldest or only child	£20.70
Additional children	£13.70 per child

You must contact the Child Benefit Office if you are paid too much or too little. Guardian's Allowance is paid in addition to Child Benefit.

If a family splits, you get £20.70 a week for the eldest child you qualify for. So if you have 2 children and one stays with you while the other goes to live with your ex-partner, you can each claim £20.70. But if you both claim for the same child, only one of you will receive the benefit.

If 2 families join together, the eldest child in the new family qualifies for the £20.70 rate. If you are entitled to Child Benefit for any other children, you will get the £13.70 rate for each of them.

Child Benefit is usually paid into your bank account on a Monday or Tuesday every four weeks. It can be paid weekly if you are a single parent or getting certain other benefits, e.g. Income Support.

Child Benefit can also count towards your National Insurance credits if your child is under 12 and you are not working or do not earn enough to pay national insurance contributions.

Jargon busters

European Economic Area (EEA) countries – all EU countries and Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein – as well as Switzerland, which is not part of the EU or EEA but has agreements with these countries. To check which countries are members of the European Union, see the Europa website.

Forms you may need to fill in

- Child Benefit claim form.
- Report a change of circumstance - e.g. if your child has turned 16, or to change an address or bank account.
- Claim form notes explain whose name can be on the account.
- Make a general enquiry.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool.
- Jobcentre Plus will work out if your benefits can be increased or if you can get other benefits.
- Child Benefit when your child turns 16.
- Claim form notes explain whose name can be on the account.
- Adopting a child? Contact the Child Benefit Office to see if you are entitled to claim. You only discuss a claim if you are the person named on the claim form. Someone else can get general advice, but will need to be authorised to discuss the claim.
- More about Guardian's Allowance.
- Child Benefit if you are living or working abroad.
- Child Benefit if your main home is now in the UK and you have permission to live in the UK.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/family/children/benefits/index_en.htm.

Who do you need to contact?

- Child Benefit: general enquiries
- Claim child benefit

Family-related benefits

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim family-related benefits, other than Child Benefit (see chapter on Child Benefit) in the United Kingdom.

If you have lived, worked and/or paid insurance in another EU country, your time living in another EU country, the period you have worked or the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits are calculated in the UK.

Here we cover:

- Guardian's Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit.
- Disability Living Allowance for children.

In what situation can I claim?

You can claim Guardian's Allowance if you are bringing up children whose parents have died, and may also be eligible if one parent is still alive.

Child Tax Credit can help with the costs of bringing up a child.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children can help with extra costs arising from looking after children with health conditions.

What conditions do I need to meet?

Guardian's Allowance

To get this allowance, all of the following need to be true:

- you are bringing up someone else's child;
- the child's parents are dead (see conditions for one surviving parent below);
- you qualify for Child Benefit;
- one of the parents was born in the UK (or lived in the UK since the age of 16 for at least 52 weeks in any 2-year period).

If you adopt a child you may still get Guardian's Allowance as long as you were getting it before you adopted the child.

If there is a surviving parent, there are other regulations you will need to meet.

Child Tax Credit

- You could be entitled to this credit as long as each child you are responsible for is under 16 or under 20 in approved education or training, (see the 'Jargon busters' box below for the definition of 'responsible'). You do not need to be working to claim.

Disability Living Allowance for children

This allowance is paid if the child you are responsible for is under 16 and has difficulties walking or needs more looking after than a child of the same age with no disability.

The child also needs to:

- be in Great Britain, another European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland when you claim. There are some exceptions, e.g. for families of members of the Armed Forces;
- have lived in Great Britain for 2 out of the last 3 years if over 3 years old;
- be allowed to enter or stay in the UK.

In the case of young babies:

- A child under 6 months must have lived in Great Britain for at least 13 weeks;
- A child aged between 6 months and 3 years must have lived in Great Britain for at least 26 of the last 156 weeks.

The rules on habitual residence do not usually apply if the child is terminally ill.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

Guardian's Allowance

Guardian's Allowance is worth £16.55 a week; it is provided on top of Child Benefit and is tax free. In some cases you will need to let the Guardian's Allowance Unit know if your circumstances change, (see the 'Who do you need to contact?' box below).

It can be backdated for up to 3 months.

Child Tax Credit

The basic amount of Child Tax Credit is up to £545 a year and this can be topped up with elements which take into account your income and circumstances, such as if your child is disabled.

Elements	Yearly amount
For each child	Up to £2 780
For each disabled child	Up to £3 140
For each severely disabled child	Up to £1 275 (on top of the disabled child payment)

Use the tax credit calculator to work out how much you could get.

Your tax credits can go up or down if your family or work life change - you must report these changes to the Tax Credit Office, (see the 'Who do you need to contact?' box below). For example, this might happen if your child leaves home or your income changes.

There is no set limit for income because it depends on your circumstances (and those of your partner).

For example, the limit is sometimes £26 100 for a one-child family but can be higher if you pay for approved childcare or one of you is disabled.

To support your claim, keep records of your income, bills, pay slips, benefits, tax credits, childcare and education. Hold on to your records for the current year and at least two years previously. You will have to renew your claim once a year.

You need to renew your tax credits once a year. The deadline is usually 31 July but your renewal pack will confirm the deadline. More information on renewal can be found here.

Disability Living Allowance for children

The Disability Living Allowance for children is tax free and made up of two components. The child might qualify for both.

Care component

Care component	Weekly rate
Lowest - help for some of the day or night	£21.80
Middle - frequent help or constant supervision during the day, supervision at night or help when someone is on dialysis	£55.10
Highest - help or supervision day and night, or the child is terminally ill	£82.30

Mobility component

Mobility component	Weekly rate
Lower - can walk but needs supervision when outdoors	£21.80
Higher - can't walk, in pain after a short walk, could be ill if they walk, blind or severely sight impaired	£57.45

If you spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a child who gets the middle or highest level of DLA you could qualify for Carer's Allowance.

If your child's circumstances change you will need to contact the Disabilities Benefits Helpline.

You may be asked to go to a meeting to assess your child's needs. You will be told where and when you need to go and what paperwork you will need, such as a passport or birth certificate for you and your child.

When your child is over 16, they might be able to claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP). PIP is being phased in across the UK: more information on moving from DLA to PIP is offered here.

Jargon busters

Responsibility for a child - you are responsible for a child if:

- they live with you all the time;
- they normally live with you and you are the main carer;
- they keep their toys and clothes at your home;
- you pay for their meals and give them pocket money;
- they live in an EEA country or Switzerland but are financially dependent on you.

Forms you may need to fill in

Guardian's Allowance claim form and guidance notes

Your child is entitled to fast-track DLA if their condition is terminal:

- complete a DLA claim form;
- include a DS1500 medical condition report with your claim form or send it soon after - these are free and you can only get them from a doctor, specialist or consultant.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool.
- Jobcentre Plus will work out if your benefits can be increased or if you can get other benefits, and help you register a change of circumstances.
- In tax law a person may have a different employment status. You can check this using the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Employment Status Indicator.
- What you need to know about DLA for children.
- Contact the Tax Credit Helpline if you are not sure whether you are responsible for the child.
- Use the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) checker to find out what happens to your child's DLA when they turn 16.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/family/children/benefits/index_en.htm.

Who do you need to contact?

Guardian's Allowance Unit

Register a change in your circumstances or ask for a claim pack:

Child Benefit Office
PO Box 1 Newcastle upon Tyne, NE88 1AA

Telephone: 0300 200 3100
Textphone: 0300 200 3103 Tax Credit Helpline

Register a change that could affect your Tax Credits:

Telephone: 0345 300 3900
Textphone: 0345 300 3909

HM Revenue & Customs Tax Credits

Contact the Tax Credit Office for a renewal pack if you do not receive on at the end of the year.

HM Revenue & Customs Tax Credits
Comben House Farriers Way
Netherton
L75 1WB

Disability Service Centre
Postal address:
Disability Benefit Centre 4
Post Handling Site B
Wolverhampton
WV99 1BY

Telephone: 0345 712 3456 Textphone: 0345 722 4433

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Maternity benefits

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim maternity benefits in the United Kingdom.

If you have lived, worked and/or paid insurance in another EU country, your time living in another EU country, the period you have worked or the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits are calculated in the UK.

Here we cover:

- Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and Leave.
- Maternity Allowance
- Paternity leave.

In what situation can I claim?

When you take time off work to have a baby, you may be eligible for:

- Statutory Maternity Leave
- Statutory Maternity Pay
- Maternity Allowance

You could also claim paid time off for antenatal care and extra help from the government.

- Maternity Allowance is usually paid if you do not qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay.
- Employees may be entitled to Paternity Leave if their partner is having a baby, adopting a child or having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement. They can get either 1 or 2 weeks leave.

What conditions do I need to meet?

You can claim **Statutory Maternity Pay** and **Leave** from your employer if you have an employment contract. For full descriptions of employment status and how that determines your rights and your employer's responsibilities, use the Employment Status Indicator.

To qualify you must:

- earn on average at least £112 a week, before tax, over 8 weeks;
- give the correct notice period;
- provide proof that you are pregnant;
- have worked for your employer continuously for at least 26 weeks up to the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth - called the 'qualifying week'.

You could still be entitled if your baby is:

- born early;
- still born after the start of your 24th week of pregnancy;
- dies after being born.

Maternity Allowance

You might get Maternity Allowance if:

- you are employed, but you cannot get Statutory Maternity Pay;
- you are self-employed and paying Class 2 National Insurance contributions;
- you are self-employed and have a Certificate of Small Earnings Exception;
- you have recently stopped working.

You must also have been:

- employed or self-employed for at least 26 weeks in the 66 weeks before the week your baby is due;
- earning at least £30 a week over any 13-week period.

You may still qualify if you have recently stopped working. It does not matter if you had different jobs or periods of unemployment.

Paternity Leave

You must tell your employer at least 15 weeks before the week the baby is expected:

- the baby's due date;
- when you want your leave to start, for example the day of the birth or the week after the birth;
- if you want 1 or 2 weeks' leave.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

Your employment rights are protected while you are on Statutory Maternity Leave, which includes your right to pay rises, build-up of holiday and return to work.

Statutory Maternity Leave

Statutory Maternity Leave is 52 weeks: ordinary Maternity Leave is the first 26 weeks, and Additional Maternity Leave is the final 26 weeks. You do not have to take the full 52 weeks, but you do have to take 2 weeks' leave after your baby is born, or 4 weeks if you work in a factory.

Usually 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth is the earliest point at which you can start your leave.

Leave will also start:

- the day after the birth if the baby is early;
- automatically, if you are off work for a pregnancy-related illness in the 4 weeks before the week (Sunday to Saturday) that your baby is due.

You will need to give your employer 8 weeks' notice if you want to change the date when you would like to return to work.

Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave is designed to give parents more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. It enables eligible mothers, fathers, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work after their child is born or placed for adoption. This could involve returning to work for part of the time and then resuming leave at a later date.

To qualify, the mother or adopter must be entitled to some form of maternity or adoption leave, have given notice to their employer to curtail it and must share the main responsibility for caring for the child with the named partner.

Statutory Maternity Pay

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is paid for up to 39 weeks. You get:

- 90% of your average weekly earnings (before tax) for the first 6 weeks;
- £139.58 or 90% of your average weekly earnings (whichever is lower) for the next 33 weeks.

SMP is paid in the same way as your wages (e.g. monthly or weekly). Tax and National Insurance will be deducted. It usually starts when you go on leave. If you are off work with a pregnancy-related illness within 4 weeks of your due date, the payment will start automatically.

If you think you are not getting the right amount or if your employer cannot pay because of insolvency, contact the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) employees' enquiry line. See the 'Who do you need to contact' box, below.

If your employer decides they do not have to pay you SMP they must give you their explanation using an SMP1 form within 7 days of making their decision. You may be entitled to claim Maternity Allowance instead.

Maternity Allowance

Maternity Allowance is worth either £139.58 a week, or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is lower. It is paid for up to 39 weeks.

You can claim as soon as you have been pregnant for 26 weeks and payments can start 11 weeks before your baby is due. You will need to fill the MA1 form (see 'Forms you may need to fill in' box) and provide:

- proof of your income - e.g. original payslips and a Certificate of Small Earnings Exemption (if applicable);
- proof of the baby's due date - e.g. a letter from the doctor or midwife, or your MATB1 certificate;
- your SMP1 form - only if you were refused Statutory Maternity Pay by your employer;
- If you are eligible you will get a form confirming your entitlement and asking you to confirm your last day at work before you take your leave.

The allowance will affect how much you get for some other benefits.

Forms you may need to fill in

The Maternity Allowance claim form.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool.
- Jobcentre Plus will work out if your benefits can be increased or if you can get other benefits, and help you register a change of circumstances.
- Maternity Benefits: technical guidance.
- Employment rights when on leave.
- You can estimate your maternity pay and work out your maternity leave online.
- The maternity planner can be used to work out the dates for your ordinary and additional leave.
- In tax law a person may have a different employment status. You can check this using the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Employment Status Indicator.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm

Who do you need to contact?

SMP inquiries

HMRC employees' enquiry line
Telephone: 0300 200 3500 Textphone: 0300 200 3519

Contact Acas (or the Labour Relations Agency in Northern Ireland) if you need advice on employment status, employee rights or employer responsibilities.

Acas helpline
0300 123 1100
Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm Saturday, 9am to 1pm

Jobcentre Plus

Telephone: 0800 055 6688
Textphone: 0800 023 4888 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Health

Benefits for caregivers

This chapter tells you what you need to know about the benefits paid to carers in United Kingdom.

If you have lived, worked and/or paid insurance in another EU country, your time living in another EU country, the period you have worked or the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits are calculated in the UK.

Here we cover:

- Carer's Allowance
- Carer's Credit
- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment

In what situation can I claim?

Carer's Allowance is paid to help you look after someone with substantial caring needs regardless of whether you are related to or live with the person you are caring for.

Carer's Credit is paid to people who care for someone for at least 20 hours a week. It is a National Insurance credit that is paid to make sure there is no gap in your record, building up your entitlement to a State Pension.

What conditions do I need to meet?

To claim Carer's Allowance you need to be 16 or over and spend at least 35 hours a week caring for the person concerned.

In order for you to claim, the person you care for must receive one of the following:

- Attendance Allowance;
- Constant Attendance Allowance at or above the normal maximum rate with Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit;
- Constant Attendance Allowance at the basic (full day) rate with a War Disablement Pension;
- Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP);
- Personal Independence Payment daily living component, or
- Disability Living Allowance - the middle or highest care rate;
- Carer's Credit is paid to people 16 aged or over, but under State Pension age. The person you are caring for will probably be receiving one of the benefits set out above, but if not you may still be able to claim. You do not need to claim if you are getting Carer's Allowance, Child Benefit for a child under 12 or are a foster carer.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

Carer's Allowance

Carer's Allowance can be worth £62.10. Use the benefits adviser to work out how much you can get. Any means-tested benefits you may be getting will be reduced by the amount you get.

If you get the benefit it can also have an impact on the benefits received by the person you care for. For example, if they are receiving a Severe Disability Premium this will stop if you get Carer's Allowance. Check to see the other benefits that might be reduced or stopped.

On the other hand, you will usually also receive National Insurance credits and contributions to protect your State Pension entitlement for every week you get carer's allowance.

You can be paid either a week in advance, or every 4 or 13 weeks.

You can apply for Carer's Allowance online or by printing and completing form DS700 (or DS700SP if you get a pension). You can also get a printed form to fill out by contacting the Carer's Allowance Unit (see the 'Who do you need to contact?' box). Return the form to the Unit.

Carer's Credit

Carer's Credit is made to make sure you do not miss out on your National Insurance contributions while you are caring for someone. Phone the helpline in the 'Who do you need to contact?' box below to request a form.

Jargon busters

Means testing - where all your assets are taken into consideration when the amount of benefits you can receive is worked out.
The **'overlapping-benefit rule'** - means you cannot get two income replacement benefits at the same time.
Habitual resident - The term 'habitual resident' is defined under EU law (see: EU Regulation on the coordination of social security systems). In practice it means the place where you have your centre of interests: a more detailed definition can be found here.

Forms you may need to fill in

The DS700 form or the DS700SP form to claim **Carer's Allowance.**

Download the Carer's Credit claim form.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) forms will be sent to you after you call the number in the 'Who do you need To Contact' box below.

DS1500 can be filled by anyone who is terminally ill, or their carer, to fast-track their PIP. This form can only be provided by your healthcare worker.

Use form AA1A to apply for Attendance Allowance by post, or use the interactive, online version.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool.
- If you can't get Carer's Allowance, Jobcentre Plus will work out if your benefits can be increased or if you can get other benefits.
- You can appeal against the decision about your Carer's Allowance if you are unhappy with it - check the date on your decision letter. There are different ways to appeal depending on whether your decision was made before 28 October 2013 or on or after 28 October 2013.
- PIP is gradually replacing Disability Living Allowance for people between 16 and 64. Use the PIP checker to find out when and if you are affected by PIP.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm.

Who do you need to contact?

Carer's Allowance and Carer's Credit:

Carer's Allowance Unit
Palatine House Lancaster Road Preston Lancashire PR1 1HB

Telephone: 0345 608 4321
Textphone: 0345 604 5312 Monday to Thursday, 8:30am to 5pm Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

Email: cau.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Statutory Sick Pay

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim Statutory Sick Pay in the United Kingdom.

In what situation can I claim?

If you are too ill to work you may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay.

What conditions do I need to meet?

You will need to have been off work sick for four days in a row and this could include non-working days.

You must be classed as an 'employee' (see also the 'Know your rights' box below) and:

- have done some work for your employer;
- have been ill for at least 4 days in a row (including non-working days);
- earn at least £112 (before tax) per week;
- tell your employer you are sick before their deadline - or within 7 days if they do not have one.

Agency workers qualify for Sick Pay, but there are different sick pay rules for agricultural workers.

You will not qualify if you:

- have received the maximum amount of SSP (28 weeks);
- have taken 3 years or more 'linked periods' of sickness - where 4 or more days of sickness happen within 8 weeks of each other;
- are getting Statutory Maternity Pay.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

You can get £88.45 a week, paid by your employer for up to 28 weeks. If you work for a company with a sick pay scheme (sometimes known as an occupational scheme) you could be entitled to more, so check your employment contract.

You are paid for days you would normally have worked, after the first 3 days you take off. It is possible to claim from more than one job.

It is paid in the same way as your wages and tax and national insurance will be deducted.

If you do not qualify for SSP, your employer must give you form SSP1 within 7 days of your illness. You can use this to apply for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) instead.

If you do not think you are being treated fairly, talk to your employer first. You can ask them to give you a reason. If this does not help, phone the helpline below (see 'Who do you need to contact?').

Forms you may need to fill in

SSP1 form: If you cannot get Statutory Sick Pay, or if it is coming to an end, you can claim Employment Support Allowance.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- In tax law a person may have a different employment status. You can check this using the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Employment Status Indicator.
- Employment status and rights.
- Fit/sick notes, what you need to know about proof of sickness.

Commission publication and website:

- http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=849&langId=en.

Who do you need to contact?

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) employees' enquiry line

If you do not think you are receiving what you are entitled to, talk to your employer. If that does not resolve the issue, contact:

HMRC employees' enquiry line:
Telephone: 0300 200 3500
Textphone: 0300 200 3212
Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

Incapacity

Disability-related benefits

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim disability-related payments.

Here we cover:

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) which is replacing Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

In what situation can I claim?

- Disability Living Allowance is being phased out and replaced with PIP. You can only make a new DLA claim for a child under 16, known as DLA for children.
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) helps with some of the extra costs caused by long-term ill-health or a disability if you are aged 16 to 64.
- PIP is gradually replacing DLA for people aged 16 to 64, even for those with an indefinite or lifetime DLA award.

What conditions do I need to meet?

To qualify for PIP you must have a long-term health condition or disability and have difficulties with daily living or mobility. You must also:

- be aged 16 to 64;
- have a long-term health condition or disability and difficulties with activities related to 'daily living' and/or mobility (see below);
- be in Great Britain when you claim - there are some exceptions, e.g. for members of the Armed Forces and their family members;
- have been in Great Britain for at least 2 of the last 3 years;
- be habitually resident in the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands;
- not be subject to immigration control (unless you are a sponsored immigrant).

There are some exceptions to these conditions if you are living in or coming from another EEA country or Switzerland.

There are other benefits to help if you are disabled.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

The rate of Personal Independence Payment depends on how your condition affects you, not the condition itself.

You will need an assessment to work out the level of help you get and so you will need to fill out a 'How your condition affects you' form. This is sent to you after you make a claim.

An independent health professional will help the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) work out the level of help you need. The decision is based on your application, any documents you include to show your situation (such as your regular bills) and the health assessment.

Your award will be regularly reassessed to make sure you're getting the right support.

Daily living component	Weekly rate
Standard	£55.10
Enhanced	£82.30
Mobility component	**Weekly rate**
Standard	£21.80
Enhanced	£57.45

You or your carer may be entitled to other financial help.

If you disagree with the decision you can request a 'mandatory reconsideration' (see 'Who do you need to contact?' below). If you still disagree fill in the form 'Notice of appeal against a decision of the Department for Work and Pensions - SSCS1' (see 'Forms you may need to fill in').

You will need to send the SSC1 within one month of the reconsideration and include the mandatory reconsideration notice.

If you are terminally ill, you can get PIP more quickly if you are not expected to live more than 6 months. Phone the DWP (see 'Who do you need to contact?') to start your PIP claim and then send them form DS1500 (you can only get this form from a doctor or other healthcare professional).

You will not need to complete the 'How your condition affects you' form or go to a face-to-face consultation.

Jargon busters

Habitual resident - The term 'habitual resident' is defined under EU law. See: EU Regulation on the coordination of social security systems). In practice it means the place where you have your centre of interests - a more detailed definition can be found here.
European Economic Area (EEA) countries – all EU countries and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – as well as Switzerland, which is not part of the EU or EEA but has agreements with these countries. To check which countries are members of the European Union, see the Europa website.

Forms you may need to fill in

To contest a decision following a mandatory reconsideration, fill in the form 'Notice of appeal against a decision of the Department for Work and Pensions - SSCS1' and send it to the address on the form.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool.
- Jobcentre Plus will work out if your benefits can be increased or if you can get other benefits, and help you register a change of circumstances.
- Full list of conditions which could entitle you to PIP.
- Use the PIP checker to find out if and when you are affected by PIP.
- If you are refused PIP, contact the department of Work and Pensions (see box below) within the month of the decision and ask for a mandatory reconsideration.
- If you still want to contest a decision, fill in a note of appeal - see 'Forms you may need to fill in'.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm.

Who do you need to contact?

DWP - Personal Independence Payment claims

Applying over the phone is the quickest way to make a claim. Someone else can call for you, but you will need to be with them when they phone.

Telephone: 0800 917 2222
Textphone: 0800 917 7777 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

You can write to the department:

Personal Independence Payment New Claims
Post Handling Site B
Wolverhampton - WV99 1AH

You will need to follow a different procedure in Northern Ireland.

Accidents at work and occupational diseases

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim benefits in the United Kingdom, after an accident at work or if you suffer from an occupational disease.

Here we cover:

- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Reduced Earnings Allowance
- Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment (this is asbestos-related)

In what situation can I claim?

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit is paid to certain people who are ill or disabled:

- due to an accident or disease caused by work
- while you were on an approved employment training scheme or course

Reduced Earnings Allowance is paid to people who cannot earn as much as they used to because of an accident or disease caused by work. It can be as much as £66.40 per week.

Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment may be made to people suffering from this condition, which is related to exposure to asbestos.

What conditions do I need to meet?

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB)

You may be able to claim in the following circumstances:
Accidents:

- you were employed when the accident or event happened;
- you were on an approved employment training scheme or course when the accident or event happened; or
- the work accident or event that caused your illness or disability happened in England, Scotland or Wales.

There are some exceptions you can ask your regional Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit Centre about.

You can also claim IIDB if you were employed in a job or were on an approved employment training scheme or course that caused your disease. The scheme covers more than 70 diseases.

You cannot claim Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit if you were self-employed.

Reduced Earnings Allowance
This can only be claimed for accidents that happened, or diseases that started, before 1 October 1990.

It will be replaced by another benefit called Retirement Allowance if both the following apply:

- You reach State Pension age
- You are not in regular employment

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB)

The amount of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit you may get depends on your individual circumstances. A medical advisor will assess your disability on a scale of 1 to 100% - usually you will need to be assessed at 14% or over to qualify for the benefit.

For example, someone assessed at 100% disabled may receive £168 a week, whereas an assessment of 20% disabled could entitle you to £33.60 a week. A guide to the percentage assessments and their relation to the amount of benefit you may be entitled can be found here.

There are other benefits, such as a lump sum for certain diseases or a Constant Care Allowance, that you may be entitled to if you are assessed as 100% disabled. Receiving IIDB can have an impact on other benefits you, or your partner, may be getting, such as Employment and Support Allowance or Jobseeker's Allowance For a list of additional benefits and the impact on those you are getting now, see the 'Know your rights' box, below.

For the forms and addresses you need, see the text boxes below.

Reduced Earnings Allowance

The maximum rate for Reduced Earnings Allowance is £66.40 a week. The amount is worked out based on how much you are paid in your regular employment.

Reduced Earnings Allowance may affect any income-related benefits you or your partner are receiving. Contact your regional Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) centre for details on whether you can claim, how much you may be entitled to and what impact the payment could have on other benefits.

Forms you may need to fill in

- Form BI100A to claim Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) for accidents
- Form BI100PD to claim IIDB for diseases

In Northern Ireland:

- Industrial Accidents Form BI 100 A (PDF 234 KB)
- Prescribed Diseases Form BI 100 PD (PDF 203 KB)

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool.
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit Centre will tell you if your condition is one that is covered by the benefit.
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefits: technical guidance.
- IIDB - other benefits that you may be entitled to.

- IIDB - effect on other benefits.
- Welfare Rights Advisers , the Macmillan Support Line on 0808 808 00 00 can offer advice to mesothelioma sufferers.
- Mesothelioma UK has a list of local asbestos support groups.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm.

Who do you need to contact?

Contact your regional IIDB centre for a printed claim form.

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit centres:

Scotland, North West England, East of England, South East England and London

Barrow Benefit Centre
Post Handling Site B Wolverhampton WV99 1RX

Telephone: 0845 603 1358
Textphone: 0845 608 8551

Yorkshire and the Humber, North East England, East and West Midlands, South West England and Wales

Barnsley IIDB Centre
Mail Handling Site A Wolverhampton WV98 1SY

Telephone: 0845 758 5433
Textphone: 0845 608 8551

In Northern Ireland you can make a claim by printing out a claim form (See the 'Forms you may need to fill in' box), and filling it in. When you have filled in the form you can either:

- post it to the office whose details are shown on the form, or
- hand it in at your nearest Social Security / Jobs and Benefits office

Employment and Support Allowance

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim Employment and Support Allowance in the United Kingdom.

If you have lived, worked and/or paid insurance in another EU country, your time living in another EU country, the period you have worked or the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits are calculated in the UK.

In what situation can I claim?

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) provides financial help to people who are unable to work because of illness or disability. It also provides personalised support to those who are able to work.

The previous system of Incapacity Benefit was phased out in 2014. You may be transferred to ESA if you have been claiming this or other benefits such as Income Support.

You may get Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if your illness or disability affects your ability to work and you are:

- under State Pension age;

- not getting Statutory Sick Pay or Statutory Maternity Pay and you have not gone back to work;
- not getting Jobseeker's Allowance.

You can apply for ESA if you are employed, self-employed, unemployed or a student on Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

You will not be entitled to the Allowance if you have more than £16 000 in savings.

You may get ESA if you have lived or worked abroad and paid enough UK National Insurance (or the equivalent in an EEA or other country with which the UK has an agreement).

What conditions do I need to meet?

Once you have put in a claim, you will get a letter telling you about your Work Capability Assessment. You will have to fill in a 'Limited capability for work questionnaire' (see 'Forms you may need to fill in' below). The questionnaire is different in Northern Ireland.

Following your Work Capacity Assessment, you will be placed in either the work-related activity group or the support group if you are entitled to ESA.

- Work-related activity group - You must go to regular interviews with an adviser who can help with things like job goals and improving your skills.
- Support group - You do not have to go to interviews, but you can ask to talk to a personal adviser. You are usually in this group if your illness or disability severely limits what you can do.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

Employment and Support Allowance

There are 2 types of ESA, contribution-based ESA which you will get if you have got enough National Insurance Contributions and income-related ESA which you will get if you are on a low income.

The amount of ESA you will get depends on your age and your circumstances. You will normally get the assessment rate for 13 weeks after your claim. This will be:

- up to £57.90 a week if you're aged under 25;
- up to £73.10 a week if you're aged 25 or over.

After that, if you're entitled to ESA, you'll be placed in one of 2 groups and will receive:

- up to £102.15 a week if you're in the work-related activity group;
- up to £109.30 a week if you're in the support group.

If you do not go to the interviews or the activities agreed with your advisor you allowance may be reduced. Sanction procedure is explained here.

Contribution-based ESA lasts a year if you are in the work-related activity group, but you can reapply at least 12 weeks after the end of the first year.

You may qualify for income-related ESA if you no longer qualify for contribution-based ESA.

To claim you will need a series of documents such as a council tax bill and a medical certificate.

Jargon busters

European Economic Area (EEA) countries – all EU countries and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – as well as Switzerland, which is not part of the EU or EEA but has agreements with these countries. To check which countries are members of the European Union, see the Europa website.

Forms you may need to fill in

Limited capability for work questionnaire - This form should not be used by residents of Northern Ireland who should contact the Employment and Support Allowance Centre.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool.
- Jobcentre Plus will work out if your benefits can be increased or if you can get other benefits, and to register a change of circumstances.
- Employment and Support Allowance leaflet.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm.

Who do you need to contact?

Jobcentre Plus

Telephone: 0800 055 6688
Textphone: 0800 023 4888 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

For a Welsh version of the questionnaire, phone: 0845 600 3018

Old-age and survivors

Pensions

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim a State Pension in the United Kingdom.

If you have lived, worked and/or paid insurance in another EU country, your time living in another EU country, the period you have worked or the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits are calculated in the UK.

In what situation can I claim?

Retirement age is not the same as State Pension age which can be between 63 and 66, depending when someone was born and if they are male or female. Anyone can carry on working past State Pension age. You can calculate your State Pension age.

Default retirement age (formerly 65) has been phased out - most people can now work for as long as they want to. You can claim your State Pension even if you carry on working. However, you have the option to defer which can increase the amount you get.

Retirement age is when an employee chooses to retire. Most businesses do not set a compulsory retirement age for their employees.

If an employee chooses to work longer they cannot be discriminated against.

However, some employers can set a compulsory retirement age if they can clearly justify it.

What conditions do I need to meet?

National Insurance itself is compulsory for most people and is usually deducted automatically from your salary. In order to claim the full basic State Pension you will need to have paid sufficient National Insurance for a certain number of years.

Each year that counts towards your State Pension entitlement is called a qualifying year. The number of qualifying years you need to build up to qualify for the full basic State Pension depends on when you will start to claim it.

Any year in which you earn more than £112, or in which you are self-employed and paying National Insurance contributions, counts as a qualifying year.

If you claim your State Pension after 6th April 2016, you will need 35 years of National Insurance contributions - whether you are a man or a woman - to be entitled to the full state pension.

For the 2016/17 tax year, you will need to earn £5 832 of income for it to count as a qualifying year.

To qualify for a basic State Pension, at least 1 of the following must apply:

- you have been working and paying National Insurance;
- you have been receiving certain benefits, e.g. for unemployment or sickness;
- you have been a parent or carer and claiming certain benefits or credits;
- you have a spouse or civil partner whose National Insurance contributions cover you, or
- you have been paying voluntary National Insurance contributions.

You need 35 years' worth of contributions or credits to get the full basic State Pension. These are your 'qualifying years'.

If you have fewer than 35 years, your State Pension will be less than the full amount but you might be able to top up by paying voluntary National Insurance contributions.

In some cases, even if you are not working, you can get National Insurance credits that count towards your State Pension.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

The maximum basic State Pension is £155.65 a week and this increases every year by whichever of the following is the highest:

- earnings - the average percentage growth in wages (in Great Britain);
- prices - the percentage growth in prices in the UK as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), or
- 2.5%.

You need to claim the pension; it is not paid automatically. Usually you will receive a letter four months before you reach State Pension age, telling you what to do. If you do not receive this letter, contact the claim line - see "Who do you need to contact" section.

Here are the ways you can claim:

- online State Pension claims;
- over the phone (see the "Who do you need to contact" section);
- download the State Pension claim form and send it to your local pension centre;
- claim from abroad including the Channel Islands.

Forms you may need to fill in

The State Pension claim form.

Find your Pension centre - fill in the online form to find contact information for your pension centre in England, Scotland or Wales. You can contact your pension centre by phone or in writing.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Retiring abroad - tax on your State Pension
- Claiming a spouse or civil partner's pension after they die

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/retire-abroad/index_en.htm

Who do you need to contact?

Transsexual people should contact the gender reassignment team at the Department of Work and Pensions.

State Pension claim line:

Telephone: 0800 731 7898
Textphone: 0800 731 7339 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm (except public holidays)

The claims procedure is different if you claim from Northern Ireland.

If you have worked abroad and/or in the UK, contact the International Pension Centre:

International Pension Centre
tvp.internationalqueries@thepensionservice.gsi.gov.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)191 218 7777 Textphone: +44 (0)191 218 7280 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

The Pension Service 11
Mail Handling Site A Wolverhampton WV98 1LW UNITED KINGDOM

Call the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Residency Helpline if you are going to return to the UK after living or retiring abroad.

HMRC Residency helpline
Telephone: 0300 200 3300 From outside the UK: +44 151 210 2222

Bereavement Benefits

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim Bereavement Benefits in the United Kingdom.

These are:

- Bereavement Payment
- Widowed Parent's Allowance
- Bereavement Allowance, which used to be known as the Widow’s Pension

In what situation can I claim?

Bereavement Payment is payable immediately following the death of a spouse or civil partner if the death occurs before state pension age and enough National Insurance payments have been made. If the death was caused by their job then you are entitled to this benefit, whether they paid National Insurance or not.

Widowed Parent's Allowance can be claimed if you have a least one dependent child living at home, if you are pregnant and your husband has died, or if you are pregnant after fertility treatment and your civil partner has died. The Allowance will continue until you stop getting Child Benefit.

Bereavement Allowance can be claimed by a surviving spouse or civil partner aged between 45 and State Pension age.

What conditions do I need to meet?

To claim a **Bereavement Payment** you need to meet two conditions:

- The late spouse or civil partner has paid the necessary national insurance contributions, or their death was caused by their work, and
- Neither you, nor your deceased spouse or civil partner, were entitled to a State Pension on the date of death, or you as the claimant were under State Pension age when your spouse or partner died.

The amount of **Widowed Parent's Allowance** you are going to receive depends on how much National Insurance contributions your late husband, wife or civil partner paid. However, if their death is caused by their work, then you can claim even if they did not pay National Insurance.

Bereavement Allowance can be claimed if you are all of the following:

- you were 45 or over when your husband, wife or civil partner died;
- you are under State Pension age;
- your late husband, wife or civil partner paid National Insurance contributions, or they died as a result of an industrial accident or disease.

You cannot claim any of these benefits if you were divorced or had dissolved the civil partnership at the time of the death. If you live with another person as husband, wife or civil partner you will not be able to claim, and neither can you claim if you are in prison. If

you are bringing up one or more children you should claim Widowed Parent's Allowance, not Bereavement Allowance.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

The Bereavement Payment is a tax-free lump sum of £2 000. Claims can only be backdated 12 months and are dated when the office gets them.

The maximum Widowed Parent's Allowance is £112.55 a week. Apply within three months of death to make sure you do not lose any money.

Bereavement Allowance can be paid for up to 52 weeks from the date your spouse or civil partner died. The amount you will be paid depends on the overall level of your spouse or civil partner's National Insurance contributions and your age at the time of their death. The maximum weekly rate varies between £33.77 at age 45 to £112.55 at age 55 or above.

The Bereavement Pack mentioned in the 'Forms to Download' box below can be used claim all these benefits.

Forms you may need to fill in

Bereavement Benefits pack (form BB1) can also be ordered from your local Jobcentre Plus. The pack includes help notes on how to fill in the claim form. The pack covers the Bereavement Payment, Widowed Parent's Allowance and Bereavement Allowance.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- A guide about bereavement benefits - how they are worked out, the eligibility rules and how to apply;
- Use the benefits adviser to check your eligibility;
- What to do after someone dies.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/death-grants/index_en.htm

Who do you need to contact?

To find out more about all the Bereavement Benefits covered in this chapter, contact:

Bereavement Service
Telephone line, +44 (0)845 606 0265 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

If you are abroad, contact:

Department for Work and Pensions
Bereavement and widows' benefits International Pension Centre Tyneview Park
Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE98 1BA

Find Bereavement Services from your council in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Social assistance

Pension Credit

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim Pension Credit in United Kingdom.

In what situation can I claim?

- Pension Credit is made up of two parts - Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit;
- If your weekly income is below £155.60 (for a single person) or £237.55 (for couples) the Guarantee Credit will top that up;
- Savings Credit is an extra payment for people who have saved up some money for their retirement.

What conditions do I need to meet?

To qualify for Guarantee Credit:

- you must live in Great Britain;
- you or your partner must have reached Pension Credit qualifying age.

The qualifying age for Pension Credit is gradually going up to 66 in line with the increase in the State Pension age for women to 65 and the further increase to 66 for men and women.

Savings Credit is paid to people who are over 65, or whose partner is, and reached that age before 6 April 2016.

When you apply for Pension Credit, your income is worked out including:

- State Pension;
- other pensions;
- most social security benefits, e.g. Carer's Allowance;
- savings, investments over £10 000 - for these £1 is counted for every £500 or part of £500 of earnings.

There are other benefits that are not counted.

If you move abroad permanently you will lose your credit.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

Pension Credit

If you are eligible for Pension Credit, the amount will depend on your circumstances.

Your circumstances	Guarantee Credit per week	Savings Credit per week
Single people	Top up to £155.60	Up to £13.07
Couples	Top up to £237.55	Up to £14.75

If you are a carer, severely disabled or have certain housing costs you could receive more.

To claim you will need:

- your National Insurance number;
- information about your income, savings and investments;
- your bank account details.

Claim within three months after you have reached Pension Credit age as it can only be backdated for that time. You can claim four months before you reach the eligible age.

Forms you may need to fill in

- Pension Credit application form to send online
- Pension Credit application form to print out and send by post

Know your rights

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool to see if you can claim additional support.
- Pension Credit and when you could get it - leaflet explaining the credit.
- Pension Credit calculator - online tool to see what you may be able to claim.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm

Who do you need to contact?

Local Service Information Points

These provide a face-to-face service where you can get help and advice on a range of benefits in England, Scotland and Wales. You can find the Point that is nearest to you, here;

Pension Credit claim line.

The quickest way to apply for Pension Credit is by phone:
Telephone: 0800 99 1234
Textphone: 0800 169 0133
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Working Tax Credits

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim working tax credits in the United Kingdom.

In what situation can I claim?

You could get Working Tax Credit if:

- you are aged 16 or over;
- you work a certain number of hours a week;
- you get paid for the work you do (or expect to), or
- your income is below a certain level.

What conditions do I need to meet?

In order to qualify you must work a certain numbers of hours a week and you will need to be over 16.

The basic amount of Working Tax Credit is up to £1 960 a year - you could get more (or less) depending on your circumstances and income.

Tax Credits are paid directly into your bank, building society account, either weekly or every 4 weeks.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

Use the tax credits calculator to check if your income is too high for tax credits and the tax credits questionnaire to check if you qualify.

If you think you are eligible, contact the Tax Credit Helpline (see the 'Who do you need to contact?' box below) for a claim form. It takes up to 2 weeks to arrive.

When you call, you will be asked for your National Insurance number (if you have one), your income from the previous year, details about any benefits you are getting and details of any childcare payments.

You can claim at any time of the year and up to 7 days before starting a new job. You apply for Childcare and Working Tax Credits on the same claim form.

It can take up to 5 weeks to process a new claim.

To support your claim, keep records of your income, bills, payslips, benefits, tax credits, childcare and your child's education. Keep records for the current tax year and at least 2 years before that.

You can also get the Credit if you are not working, if you have worked the necessary number of hours before the gap in your employment happens. You will have Statutory Sick Pay, or an equivalent benefit, if you were on sick leave.

What you could be entitled to:

You are a couple applying together	Up to £2 010 a year
You are a single parent	Up to £2 010 a year
You work at least 30 hours a week	Up to £810 a year
You have a disability	Up to £2 970 a year
You have a severe disability	Up to £1 275 a year (on top of the disability payment)
You pay for approved childcare	Up to £122.50 (1 child) or £210 (2 or more children) a week

You will usually need to renew your claim once a year, by using your renewal pack which will be sent to you by the Tax Credit Office. This should reach you in April or in June. If you do not receive one, contact the Office to let them know. You can renew online if you get the renewal pack.

If you miss the 31 July deadline for renewal, you will receive a summary from the Office. 30 days after this, your credits will stop if you do not send in your renewal application.

Here is a list of documents and information you will need when you renew.

You may be informed that your credits will be renewed automatically, in which case you will not have to do anything.

If your circumstances change you must let the Tax Credit Office know. A list of changes that could affect your tax credit is set out here.

Jargon busters

Approved childcare - The childcare must be registered or approved (the carer can confirm this). Childcare can include care provided at home, school or somewhere else by a childminder, play scheme, nursery or club etc.

Forms you may need to fill in

You can renew your tax credits online if:

- you have received a renewal pack with an annual declaration;
- you have no changes to report.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool;
- Use the tax credits calculator to check if your income is too high for tax credits;
- Use the tax credits questionnaire to check if you qualify.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm

Who do you need to contact?

Make a claim for Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit or to report a change:

By letter:
Tax Credit Office
Preston
PR1 4AT

Telephone: 0345 300 3900
Textphone: 0345 300 3909 Outside the UK: +44 (0)2890 538 192 Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm Saturday, 8am to 4pm

Where to send the application form when you have filled it out:

There is an address at the top of the form, or, if you claim benefits, you can give it to your Jobcentre Plus, or Social Security Office if you live in Northern Ireland.

Universal Credit

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim Universal Credit in United Kingdom.

In what situation can I claim?

Universal Credit is being phased in across the UK and will be rolled out in each part of the country by 2019.

It will eventually replace:

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Income Support;
- Working Tax Credit;
- Child Tax Credit;
- Housing Benefit.

What conditions do I need to meet?

You may be able to claim Universal Credit if you are working or self-employed and your income is low, or you are out of work.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

The amount of Universal Credit you will receive depends on your situation. Until the end of 2019, it will also depend on where you live.

If you are not eligible to apply for Universal Credit, you can:

- claim Jobseeker's Allowance if you are looking for work, or
- claim Employment and Support Allowance if you are ill or disabled;
- If you do get the credit, you may also be able to claim other benefits.

Unlike current benefits, the credit will be paid directly into your bank account once a month, including the housing benefit component, and you will then pay your landlord yourself.

You will claim the credit online (it will take 20-40 minutes) or by phone (see the boxes below) and your claim will be followed up by an interview.

Make sure you have the following information at hand before you start:

- your National Insurance number;
- details of the bank, building society or Post Office account you want your Universal Credit paid into;
- your rent agreement (if you have one);
- details of your savings or other capital;
- details of any income that is not from work (e.g. from an insurance plan);
- details of any other benefits you are getting.

If you make a claim you will have to sign a Claimant Commitment, which is unique to you. You and your 'work coach' will decide what should go into your commitment: for example, how many hours you should spend looking for work. You will also need to plan and record your job seeking.

If you are successful, you will usually get your first payment 1 month and 7 days after you have made your claim.

Forms you may need to fill in

- Claim Universal Credit;
- If you are turned down for Universal Credit: Notice of appeal against a decision of the Department for Work and Pensions - SSCS1.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool;
- Jobcentre Plus will work out if your benefits can be increased or if you can get other benefits, and help you register a change of circumstances;
- If you are turned down for Universal Credit, you have the right to ask the Department for Work and Pensions to reconsider. This process is called a mandatory reconsideration;
- If you are still not happy you can contest by filling out an SSCS1 form, including your mandatory reconsideration form.

Commission publication and website:

- http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=849&langId=en.

Who do you need to contact?

Claiming Universal Credit

This helpline will give you advice on your claim and you will need to contact them to report any change in your circumstance.

Universal Credit helpline

Telephone: 0845 600 0723
Textphone: 0845 600 0743

Unemployment

Job Seeker's Allowance

This chapter tells you what you need to know in order to claim Job Seeker's Allowance in the United Kingdom.

If you have lived, worked and/or paid insurance in another EU country, your time living in another EU country, the period you have worked or the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits are calculated in the UK.

In what situation can I claim?

Job Seeker's Allowance is paid to help people while they look for work.

What conditions do I need to meet?

If you are over 18 but under the State Pension age, available for work and meet the other requirements set out here, you can put in a claim for Job Seeker's Allowance.

You will have to go for an interview to complete your application form. Once your claim has been accepted, you will have to go your local Jobcentre once a fortnight to show you have been looking for work. This is known as 'signing on'.

To get income-based JSA you must prove that you've been living in the UK or Common Travel Area for 3 months before you claim if you are:

- a UK national who has recently returned from abroad and you have not worked since coming back to the UK;
- an EEA or non-EEA national and you have not worked since arriving in the UK.

If you are an EEA national who has worked or been self-employed in the UK since you arrived, you may have to provide:

- evidence of your earnings;
- details of employment;
- You will still have to attend an interview at a Jobcentre to get JSA.

What am I entitled to and how can I claim?

There are two types of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA): the type you can claim will be worked out by Jobcentre Plus, and they will also see how much tax will be charged.

The Contribution-based JSA is paid for 182 days (about 6 months):

18 to 24	£57.90
25 or over	£73.10

As the name implies, you can only get this if you have paid enough class 1 National Insurance contributions in the last two tax years.

Income-based JSA is paid if you have not clocked up enough National Insurance contributions, or it can be paid if you have gone over your 182 days of contribution-based JSA.

Single (under 25)	£57.90
Single (25 or over)	£73.10
Couples (both aged 18 or over)	£114.85

You could get this if you have not paid enough National Insurance as an employee and you are on a low income.

The benefit cap limits the amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can get. Some individual benefits are not affected, but the cap may affect the total amount of benefit you get.

You can start your claim online and you can also make a 'rapid reclaim' if you have had JSA in the last 182 days (approximately 6 months). Reclaims can be made online and should take about 10 minutes.

If you claim online you will get a text or a phone call fixing the time and date of your interview, within two working days of your claim. You can take someone with you to a JSA interview.

At the interview you have to agree things such as:

- what steps you can take to find work, like improving your skills;
- how you can improve your chances of getting a job, for example, get help on writing a CV, preparing for interviews, looking for work.

This is called a 'Jobseeker's Agreement'. In some areas of the country the agreement you'll be signing is called a 'Claimant Commitment'.

Your JSA may be stopped, for up to three years, if you do not follow your agreement or commitment and can't give a good reason.

You must let your Jobcentre know if your circumstances change or you could find you are committing benefit fraud. Volunteering will not normally affect your allowance, but let the Jobcentre know before you start.

Forms you may need to fill in

- Claim Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) online;
- Rapid reclaim

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- Benefits Advisor, an online benefits calculation tool;
- The eligibility rules are different if you live in Northern Ireland;
- If you are self-employed, you could get income-based JSA, tax credits or Employment and Support Allowance instead of contribution-based JSA;
- If you do not think Jobcentre Plus has treated you fairly you can complain here;
- Job Seeker's Allowance leaflet.

Commission publication and website:

- http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/index_en.htm

Who do you need to contact?

Your nearest Social Security / Jobs and Benefits office in Northern Ireland.

Tell Jobcentre Plus if your circumstances change as this can affect how much you get and you might be committing benefit fraud.

Claim JSA by phone if you can't do so online:

Jobcentre Plus
Telephone: 0800 055 6688
Welsh language: 0800 012 1888
Textphone: 0800 023 4888 Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

Moving abroad

Contributions paid abroad can count

This chapter tells you what you need to know about moving around the EU and the impact that has on your social security benefits.

Social Insurance and EC Regulations

If you are going to work in another EEA country you will generally no longer be a part of the UK social security system and the laws of your new country will apply to you.

If you have paid insurance in another EEA country and come back to the UK, the contributions you have paid may be taken into account when your benefits (based on payment of contributions) are calculated in the UK.

What benefits are affected

If you are coming back to the UK, the ability to combine the contributions you have paid in other EEA countries applies to the following benefits:

- Maternity Allowance.
- Employment and Support Allowance (contributory).
- State Pension.
- Bereavement Benefits.
- Jobseeker's Allowance (contributory).

What do I need to do?

When you are applying for a contributory UK social security benefit you will be asked if you have ever been employed in another EEA country.

You will need to know:

- the country where you worked;
- the name and address of your employer there;
- the dates you worked there, and
- Your Social Security Number there.

If you have been getting Unemployment Benefit in another EEA country for 4 weeks, you can transfer it to the UK for up to 3 months. You will need to send us form U2, filled in by the social security authority in that country.

Jargon busters

The European Economic Area (EEA) – all Member States of the European Union, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – as well as Switzerland, which is not part of the EU or EEA State but has agreements with these countries.
Habitual resident - The term 'habitual resident' is not defined in UK law (although EU law does define it - see: EU Regulation on the coordination of social security systems). In practice it means the place where you have your centre of interests - a more detailed definition can be found here.
National Insurance number - this is your personal number, which is a unique reference number that helps you access social security benefits, public services and information in the UK.

Know your rights

The links below set out your rights in law. They are not European Commission sites and do not represent the view of the Commission:

- International social security agreements
- What you should do before you move to another country
- Claiming benefits if you live, move or travel abroad

Commission publication and website:

- http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=849&langId=en

Who do you need to contact?

International Pension Centre
The Pension Service 11 Mail Handling Site A Wolverhampton WV98 1LW United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 (0)191 218 7777
Textphone: +44 (0)191 218 7280
Email: tvp.internationalqueries@thepensionservice.gsi.gov.uk

Main residence

Habitual residency

This chapter tells you what you need to know about the 'habitual residency' requirements, which you need to comply with in order to claim some means-tested benefits.

Am I habitually resident?

The Habitual Residence Test has two elements:

- a legal right to reside; and
- an objective assessment of factual evidence of habitual residence.

The legal right to reside is demonstrated by having a right of residence in the UK under UK, EU or international law.

The term 'habitually resident' is not defined in UK law. In practice it means that you have a proven close link to the UK. The term also conveys permanence - it means a person has been here for some time and intends to stay here for the foreseeable future.

Proving you are habitually resident relies heavily on fact. If you have lived in the UK all your life, you will probably have no difficulty showing that you satisfy the factors that indicate habitual residence.

You will be asked a series of questions to find out what efforts you have made to settle in the UK. If you are a job seeker, you will be asked what you are actively doing to find work.

What benefits are affected?

If you want to claim a means-tested benefit in the UK you will need to satisfy the entitlement rules for each benefit to qualify.

For the following benefits, you will also need to be habitually resident in the United Kingdom to qualify.

The test applies to the following benefits:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Pension Credit;
- Housing Benefit;
- Universal Credit.

To claim Child Tax Credits and Child Benefit you have to prove you have the right to reside, and that you are 'ordinarily' resident. Seek advice if you want to claim these benefits.

Jargon busters

Habitual resident - The term 'habitual resident' is defined under EU law. See: EU Regulation on the coordination of social security systems). In practice it means the place where you have your centre of interests - a more detailed definition can be found here.
European Economic Area (EEA) countries - all EU countries and Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. To check which countries are members of the European Union, see the Europa website.

Know your rights

- Guidance on what is considered as being 'habitually resident' in the UK (1967/2013).

- What is the habitual residence test - Advice Guide and EEA nationals and the habitual residence test from the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Commission publication and websites:

- http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=849&langId=en.